

## THE RED MIST

The exploits of an Adventurer Who Married—and Then Fell in Love

BY RANDALL PARRISH

CHAPTER VIII.

(Continued.)

Waiting the Next Moe.

PUSHED the man forward

and flung him down on the

bed, still retaining my grip

on his collar.

"Not a move, or a sound,"

I whispered. "Attempt to betray us, and

you are not worth the snap of a

finger, Miss Harwood."

"Close the door and lock it; is there

a bolt?"

"A strong iron one, but it seems

weak."

I stopped across, and forced it into

the socket with a sharp click. The

door opened a vivid flash of red lit

up the whole interior, the light glar-

ing through the unshaded windows

and reflecting from the walls. Nichols

started up with a little cry of terror,

and forced his back.

"This is not the house," I said sternly.

"They must have fired the stable.

Keep down-out of sight. Miss Noreen,

creep across that nearest window

and take a glance out—be careful

that no one sees you. I'll keep guard

of our prisoner friend."

"Is it the stable, Miss Noreen?" I

asked.

"Yes," with a quick glance back-

ward. "The whole west end is ablaze;

I think it was fired in two places."

"Do you see anything of the men?"

"Not clearly, except two or three

flashing back and forth between the

house and the stable. I think there

are horses picketed beyond in the or-

chard, but am not sure—yes, there are

men there with them."

"Are meant to have company at

wedding?"

"Oh, hush!" her hand caught my

elbow. "They—they are coming back

to the house now."

CHAPTER IX.

A Marriage by Duress.

HE silently moving figures

seemed more like specters

than men. As I strove vainly

to discover where they

had vanished I perceived the faint

glow of grey across the eastern sky.

Daylight was coming; the gang meant

to smash the house, again, perhaps

fire if as they had the stable, and then

ride away before the Federal garrison

at Lewisburg could receive the

alarm. I turned to Noreen and said:

"This March without has convinced

me that we are still hidden in the

house. Are there any other place bet-

ween this in which to hide?"

"We shook her head."

"Well, then we must fight it out

if they come; you have your

revolver, isn't the equal already

loaded, listen!"

I stood, trapped, not back and forth

in the lower hall, and the sound of

hoofs reached us, the words indis-

tinguishable. There was an echo of

colored wood, the crash of dishes

and loud laugh.

"They—they are searching the

house," she whispered, her voice

shaking. "And—looking it. Do you

hear that? They are even tearing the

carpet from the floor. Some of them

are coming up here."

"I am afraid so—but you must not

lose your nerve. We shall have to

fight."

"Fight? But what use?" and she

grasped my arm with both hands.

"Why? Why are you ten to one, and

there is no chance for us to outwit

them? Do you think I am a hero?"

"Historical girl—it is not that! I—

I would not be so afraid only for that

man. I cannot fall into his power.

I will still myself first. You do not

know Anna—well, but I do. He is a

dirty, foul, cruel dog; I would rather

can see. They—they are in the front

rooms now—hear them! We haven't

a moment to lose. Will you—will

you consent to marry me?"

She shrank back a step, staring at

me with wide-open eyes, breathing

hard.

"Marry! marry you?" she faltered

wildly. "Why, what can you mean!

I—I do not understand!"

"Of course not—the conception is

wild, impractical, perhaps. I must

seem so to you—yet listen. It is the

one way left open to save you from

Anne Cowan. You can trust me? You

do trust me, do you not?"

"Yes—but—"

"This is no time to question. They

are coming here now, those fellows

with Anne Cowan at their head. You

know what I mean. Whatever the real

object may be some among them

have not hesitated at murder for its

attainment—they will not spare you

the question is not do you wish to

marry me, but do you want to save

me more than you do Anne Cowan? Do

you hear them breaking down those

doors at the front of the house? There,

by the sound, some one is already in the room and is to

this. Listen! It will be a form only—I

am not convinced enough to believe

you desire me for your husband.

But you know me, and I offer you

confidence in my honor, and I offer

you this opportunity to escape from

that brute. He cannot marry you

if you are already my wife."

"Yes, there are enough of them;

but that might happen any day. No

doubt it would, for otherwise I

should fight to the end. I do not

think being your husband will save

me in the least of my danger—and it

will possibly, legally, protect you."

"But how can it? Will it be legal?"

"Noreen, don't stop to argue, or

doubt. I urged, grasping her arm in

eagerness. "We haven't time. Listen

to those voices in the hall! Of course

it will be legal—Nichols is an

ordained minister, and as license is

required, I shall never attempt to

hold you, Noreen, and any court

will set you free the moment you tell

the story. There, the only thing,

for you to consider now, is escape

from Anne Cowan."

"You do this to—save me?"

"To keep you from falling help-

lessly into the clutches of a beast—

tell me yes! There they are now,

trying the door! Answer—will you?"

"—Yes, Tom Wyatt!"

With one leap, I was at her. I had

Nichols by the collar, the muzzle of

my revolver at his head. A heavy

foot crashed against the locked door,

and without gave utterance to an

oath.

"Marry me to this girl," I com-

manded sternly. "Come now, not a

word; don't wait to ask a question.

Noreen, I think I can clear up the

mystery."

"Open up in there or we'll break

down the door!" came hoarsely from

the hallway.

My eyes never left Nichols's face.

"He—be—beat down the door?"

What he read of three. I knew not

but his lips began to tremble, and

he looked at me with a look of

alarm, though I could scarcely

distinguish a word. His face was

grey with sweat, and he was not look-

ing at the silent girl—I saw not look

realized that the hand held in mine

trembled, and once, when she had to

speak, the two words uttered were

alone.

"Never surely was there a stranger

marriage in all the world. The dying

embers of the stable fire shot red

glow over the whole scene. The

## Waiting for the 18th!

By Robert Minor



Third United States Cavalry uni-

form."

"You will, however, recognize me,

Lieutenant. Noreen said pleasantly,

and extended her hand, and, if you

will, I think I can clear up the

mystery."

"Surely! I only desire an opportu-

nity to answer any question. He is

Thomas Wyatt, the son of the late

Judge Wyatt, whose home was on

the ridge yonder. We were children

together."

"A rebel?"

"Heavily. I never thought to enter

carelessly, but I certainly

preferred greater privacy than this. You

are in command?"

"No; Capt. Whitlock is below."

He ordered the soldiers out of the

room and the door closed. He had

found his own home destroyed, and

this was the nearest shelter to be

found. He supposed the house de-

stroyed, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

house, and he was now in the

cuming the matter," said Raymond

tardly. "If we do we may have a real

fight on our hands before we are

safely back in Lewisburg." He

planned almost squarely in front of

me. "See here, it is time you did

some talking. You haven't opened

your mouth yet."

"There has been no occasion," I re-

plied pleasantly. "The others have

told all you need to know without

my even being questioned."

"I have a mind to search you," he

retorted, completely losing his tem-

per.

"At your pleasure, Lieutenant," I

spoke coldly enough, although there

was a catch in my throat at sudden

memory of the paper I bore contain-

ing his name. "And there is no

guessing what you might find in

Lieutenant Harwood's uniform."

We were still looking defiantly at

each other's eyes, and it began to

occur to me that his evident dislike

must have some other basis than a

mere suspicion that I might be a

Confederate spy. Did it arise rather

because of my apparent friendliness

with Noreen, Harwood, and her swift

words of defense? Could there be a

personal motive urging this young

West Pointer to determine my guilt?

A trooper appeared in the open door,

whispered something to Whitlock, and

a low tone to Whitlock. I failed to

catch the words spoken, but heard

the captain answer:

"Certainly, Corporal, have him

come up at once."

The soldier disappeared down the

hall, and the lieutenant stepped back

across the room, bending his head to

whisper something privately into

Whitlock's ear. Then a man came

hastily into the room through the

opened door. My heart leaped into

my throat at sight of him—he was

Capt. Fox.

## CHAPTER XI.

## A Prisoner.

HE captain was hatless, and

a bloody handkerchief was

wound about his head; his

uniform was torn and black-

ened with mud. He saw Whit-

lock first, and gripped his hand

warmly, his glance straying from

the face of the little captain to the

occupants of the room.

"God, but it is good to see a blue

uniform again," he exclaimed heart-

ily. "What was the row here, Fred—

some guerrilla work? Ah, by Jove!"

his eyes brightening as he recog-

nized me. "Raymond, I am glad to

see you again," and he strode for-

ward, his eye smiling, his hand held

out. "Old Ned swore to me you

were dead, but the sergeant said you

got away at the first rush. Not even

a scratch—hey?"

"Just a moment,